

## THE BOOK OF OLD SHIPS

differed somewhat in each different locality and that changes were constantly taking place from time to time in such forms in each of such places. So that the best we can do is to say that our illustration shows a Northern carrack taken from a print of the engraver who signed himself with a mark that looks somewhat like the letters W. A. The date may be placed about the middle of the 15th Century. The print referred to, which has the sovereign merit of giving the name of the vessel represented, while offering all one could reasonably expect from an artist of this period, is not by any means perfect.

It is only by supplying its defects from other sources that one can arrive at a reasonable representation of the whole.

It will be seen that the carrack usually had four large wales. Skids strengthened the sides. In the carracks of Southern waters it was customary to permit the ends of the deck beams to project beyond the planking of the vessel's sides. These ships usually had three, sometimes four, masts, the mainmast being much larger than the other two. A diminutive main-topmast appeared at quite an early date, but this spar was often little more than a flag-staff.

One of the most recent "finds" showing representations of carracks is an illustration to a French translation of Boccaccio's "*La Teseide*." It is in the Vienna National Library. Usually such miniature illustrations of contemporary 15th Century books and manuscripts, owing to their small scale and conventional handlings, are of little value in furnishing reliable information as to the shipping of this period.